

Rocky Mountain

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
Rocky Mountain National Park



Pets Spring/Summer 2014



Pets and their owners can have very special relationships. However, a national park is not always the best place for pets. Rocky Mountain National Park is a designated natural area and its purpose is to preserve and protect the park's natural conditions, scenic beauties and wildlife.

Where Pets are Not Allowed

PETS ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL AREAS OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK NOT ACCESSIBLE BY MOTOR VEHICLES, including ALL trails and meadows

Where Pets Can Go

Leashed pets may accompany you in the following areas of the park:

- Along established roads or in parking areas
- Within established campgrounds and picnic areas

Pets must be kept on leashes no longer than six feet. Pet owners must pick up and dispose of pet excrement in trash receptacles. Pets may not make noise that impacts visitors or wildlife.

Why Can't I Have My Dog on Trails?

Dogs are predators. Dogs can chase, scare and transmit diseases to wild animals. Dogs leave behind a 'predator' scent typical of all wild canines like coyotes. This scent can linger in the area for long periods of time and can disrupt or alter the behavior of the native animals this park protects. Dogs can bite humans and some people are uncomfortable around dogs. Park visitors should be able to enjoy native wildlife in their natural environment without disruption from other people's pets. Pets may dig or trample fragile vegetation. Additionally, park regulations help protect your pet's well-being; your pet could become prey for wildlife, including coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats and owls.

When Your Pet is Here

Pet owners have the special responsibility of following park rules for pets. For the safety of your pet and the benefit of the park wildlife and other visitors, pets should not be left unattended. You may not leave your pet unattended in vehicles if it creates a danger to the animal or if the animal becomes a public nuisance. Pets may not be left tied to vehicles, trees or other objects.

Physiologically, pets, more than humans, are susceptible to overheating. Even in the mountains, interior temperatures of vehicles rise quickly and pets left in vehicles can overheat and die. Research shows that temperatures inside cars can rise dramatically, even on mild days. A cracked window provides little relief from rising temperatures. A car's interior temperature can increase by an average of 40 degrees within an hour, with 80 percent of that increase in the first 30 minutes.

Service animals that have been individually trained to perform specific tasks for the benefit of persons with disabilities are allowed in the park.

Emotional support ("therapy animals") are not service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act and may not access trails or other non-motorized areas.

Pet owners violating park regulations will be cited, fined, and/or issued a mandatory appearance before the United States Magistrate Court in Denver.

Leashed pets are permitted on some Rocky Mountain National Park roads when those roads are closed in winter to motor vehicles. Check with a visitor center or call 970-586-1206 for current status.

Doggy daycare, boarding facilities and veterinary clinics are available in nearby communities

Hiking Alternatives Spring/Summer 2014

A major flood damaged areas on the east side of the park and surrounding communities in September 2013. Pet owners wishing to hike with their dogs have several alternatives outside Rocky Mountain National Park. Please check with the appropriate agency for the most up-to-date conditions.
(USFS = US Forest Service)

Trail	Trailhead Location	Distance One Way (or loop)	Brief Description	Dog Etiquette
East of Rocky Mountain National Park				
Buchanan Pass USFS Boulder	West end of Camp Dick campground; turn off Hwy 72 at Peaceful Valley, 24 miles south of Estes Park	Red Deer Lake 6.9 mi. Buchanan Pass 9.1 mi	Trail parallels north side of the middle St. Vrain Creek. Many trail intersections.	Dogs must be on leashes no longer than 6 ft in wilderness area
♦ ALL CROSIER MOUNTAIN TRAILS / TRAILHEADS TEMPORARILY CLOSED DUE TO FLOOD DAMAGE				
♦ Crosier Mountain USFS Ft. Collins 970-295-6700	3 trailheads near Glen Haven	3.9 miles from trailhead in downtown Glen Haven	Panoramic views from summit	Dogs can be off leash but leashes recommended due to wildlife
★ HERMIT PARK AREA INCLUDING TRAILS / TRAILHEADS TEMPORARILY CLOSED DUE TO FLOOD DAMAGE				
★ Hermit Park Larimer County 970-577-2090	6 miles east of Estes Park on US Hwy 36	Kruger Rock Trail and Homestead Meadows Connector Trail	Great views. Fee required.	Dogs must be on leashes no longer than 6'
Indian Peaks Wilderness USFS Boulder	Brainard Lake, 30 miles south of Estes Park off Hwy 72	Various, including Lake Isabelle (2 mi), Blue Lake (2.5 mi), Mt. Audubon	Many spectacular lakes and peaks are accessed from this beautiful area. Fee required.	Dogs must be on leashes no longer than 6 ft in wilderness area
Lake Estes Trail/Dog Park Town of Estes Pk	Trail has several starting points around the lake	3.75 miles	Hard surfaced trail encircles Lake Estes. Dog park on Community Drive by lake	Dogs must be on leashes on the trail.
* LILY MOUNTAIN TRAIL AND PARKING AREA DAMAGED BUT OPEN				
* Lily Mountain USFS Ft. Collins 970-295-6700	Trailhead parking along Hwy 7 6 mi south of Estes Park. Trail not accessible from Lily Lake.	1.9 miles	Panoramic views from summit. Elevation gain is 1,006 feet.	Dogs can be off leash but must be under control and not harass wildlife or hikers
✦ LION GULCH / HOMESTEAD MEADOWS AREA TEMPORARILY CLOSED DUE TO FLOOD DAMAGE				
✦ Lion Gulch USFS Ft Collins 970-295-6700	8 miles east of Estes Park on US Hwy 36	3.4 miles	Trail to historic ca.1889-1923 Homestead Meadows	Dogs can be off leash but must be under control and not harass wildlife or hikers
Mud Lake Boulder County	1 miles north of Nederland	3 miles of multi-use trails	190 acres of open space. Mud Lake has picnic tables.	Dogs must be on leashes
Rabbit Mtn Boulder County	2 miles east of Lyons on Hwy. 66	Over 5 miles of multi-use trails	Beautiful views in this transition foothill area	Dogs must be on leashes
West of Rocky Mountain National Park				
Cascade Mountain, Bowen Pass, Bowen Lk Loop USFS Granby	US Hwy 34 to County Rd. 4. Take Cty Rd 4 for 3 miles. Turn right at fork/FSR 120 to the North Supply Trailhead	15 mile loop. Bowen Lake is 4 miles one- way from the trailhead.	Trail begins as ATV accessible road. Several small stream crossings. Great views.	Dogs must be on leashes no longer than 6' in the wilderness area
Indian Peaks Wilderness USFS Granby	US Hwy 34 to Cty Rd 6/FSR 125/Arapaho Bay Rd. Follow this road for 10 miles to the Monarch Lake parking area.	Access beautiful lakes and peaks, including Monarch Lake Loop Trail (4 mi), Crater Lk (7.25 mi - 10,345').	Easy loop around Monarch Lake is popular year-round. The jagged and spectacular Indian Peaks predominate. Fee required.	Dogs must be on leashes no longer than 6' in the wilderness area